United Nations A/ES-10/533 S/2011/606

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
3 October 2011

Original: English

General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-sixth year

Identical letters dated 30 September 2011 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

In follow-up to my letter of 28 September 2011, I regret to inform you of the continued escalation of Israeli aggression and oppression against the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

In the midst of serious efforts by the Palestinian leadership and the international community to resume a credible political process aimed at achieving a peaceful solution, Israel, the occupying Power, continues to move in the opposite direction, refusing to commit to the path of peace.

The following are just a few of the examples of the violations and crimes committed in the recent period by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people:

- Punitive and humiliating measures continue to be inflicted on the thousands of Palestinians detained and imprisoned by Israel. Such measures include the imposition of solitary confinement on prisoners, which is described by some who have spent more than 10 years in isolation as a "slow death" policy. Palestinian prisoners, including children, also continue to be subjected to unhygienic conditions, physical and mental abuse and other forms of inhumane treatment, including torture. The persistence of this Israeli policy and its deliberate intensification, as well as recent comments by the Israeli Defense Minister that Palestinian prisoners have no rights in Israeli jails in response to demands to end humiliating measures, has led Palestinian prisoners to begin a hunger strike in at least 20 Israeli prisons and detention centres.

- The occupying Power also continues with its daily military raids and arrests. In the recent period, this has included the detention of two Palestinian children, Wajd Abu Hlayyil, aged 8, and Umran Mansour, aged 10, from the Silwan area of Occupied East Jerusalem. In this regard, reports have emerged of Israeli occupying forces also forcibly entering Palestinian homes in the

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night, seizing children and photographing them for the purpose of so-called "military mapping exercises" used to later identify and apprehend children involved in stone-throwing or other activities. The most recent such incident was documented in the village of Nabi Saleh, where Palestinian residents hold weekly protests against Israeli colonization.

- This week also witnessed the arrest and detention of another Palestinian elected official, Ahmad Attoun from East Jerusalem, who was seized by the occupying forces from an International Committee of the Red Cross building where he and two other officials, Mohammed Totah and Khaled Abu Arafeh, who had taken shelter after Israel revoked their Jerusalem residencies and declared a decision to deport them in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention prohibition on the forcible transfer of civilians from occupied territory.

- As conveyed in my letter of 28 September, the occupying Power also persists with its illegal settlement activities throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, especially in and around East Jerusalem. In addition to the rabid construction of new settlement units, Israel has been handing down a series of military orders for the confiscation of more Palestinian land and properties. Recently, the Israeli occupying forces notified the village of Battir near Bethlehem of new confiscation orders for 148 dunums of land owned by 40 families and containing vegetable, fruit and olive groves and water wells on which these families subsist. This land has been targeted because of its proximity to the train line being built to connect Israel's illegal settlements. Also, families in the village of Beit Ummar, south of Bethlehem, were served with military orders for the confiscation of 800 dunums of land for the building of yet another Israeli-only bypass road, in addition to the hundreds of such roads that are severing Palestinian communities, displacing more and more families, and destroying the contiguity of the Palestinian land.

- Israeli demolition of Palestinian homes and properties also continues. A primary school for Bedouin children in the Jordan Valley has been served demolition orders this week and is just one of many structures in the area targeted for demolition by the occupying Power, which has destroyed at least 342 Palestinian structures in these rural and marginalized areas. Yesterday, 29 September, the occupying Power also served home demolition orders to seven families from Ezbet Shofeh village, south-east of Tulkarem. The Israeli occupying forces that raided the village informed the families that they must carry out the demolitions within one week's time or it will be carried out by the occupying forces at the owners' expense.

- Israeli settler attacks also continue throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Yesterday, settlers rampaged on lands belonging to Palestinian families in the town of Al-Dhahiryeh south of Al-Khalil, destroying over 55 olive trees and vandalizing properties with threatening anti-Palestinian graffiti. Also yesterday, dozens of armed Israeli settlers, under the protection of the army, raided the village of Yasouf in the northern West Bank. The settlers fired live ammunition to intimidate and terrorize the farmers in the area to force them to leave their lands. Settlers from an illegal settlement near Nablus also attacked and destroyed water pipelines emanating from a water spring in the village of Madama.

Israel's illegal actions are further poisoning the environment and exacerbating tensions between the two sides and further complicating the efforts being made by concerned parties for peace. Such actions will only undermine the chances for any real progress and threaten to further destabilize an already unsustainable situation with far-reaching consequences, including with regard to the viability of the two-State solution. We therefore reiterate our appeal to the international community, including the Security Council, to uphold international law and their responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security and to take the necessary measures to bring to a halt Israel's violations with a view to stabilizing the situation and making progress.

This letter is in follow-up to our previous 404 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, since 28 September 2000. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 28 September 2011 (A/ES-10/532-S/2011/597) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations